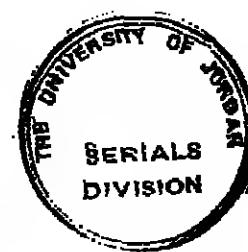


Khribet Al Samra crops to be destroyed

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet decided Saturday to destroy all vegetables irrigated by Khribet Al Samra water upon a recommendation issued by a committee chaired by Minister of Water and Irrigation Samir Kassar. The Cabinet entrusted the ministry with determining lots of land irrigated by Khribet Al Samra water which was found contaminated. These lands extend from the Khribet Al Samra area down to the King Talal Dam. According to the Cabinet decision, farmers in the area will only be allowed to plant forest trees and plants used as animal feed. The Cabinet approved a grant agreement between the Employment and Development Fund and the European Community. The ECU 4 million grant is the remaining part of two financial protocols that aim to reduce the effects of implementing economic reform programme and to help create new job opportunities through extending loans and grants to non-governmental institutions and individuals. The grant will be used in training and preparing labour force, administering the project, aids to non-governmental institutions such as the Noor Al Hussein foundation, the Queen Alia Jordan Social Welfare Fund (QAF), and the General Union of Voluntary Societies and Save the Children Fund as well as extending loans to small farmers.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرأى



Turkey seeks Iranian help against rebels

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkish Interior Minister Ismet Sezgin, in Tehran to discuss border security, sought Iran's help Saturday in curbing rebel Kurds and promised to cooperate in return against the Iranian opposition group Mujahadeen-e-Khalq. "We need cooperation from our neighbours in our struggle with the PKK (Kurdish Labour Party)," Mr. Sezgin told Anatolian news agency after meeting his Iranian counterpart Abdoljale Nouri. He also promised the release of an Iran-bound, arms-laden Cyprus-registered ship whose seizure by Turkey last October soured relations between Tehran and Ankara. Welcoming Mr. Sezgin's call for cooperation, Mr. Nouri said Iran would do its part to secure the border against infiltration by the PKK, whose eight-year fight for an independent Kurdish state in southeast Turkey has cost 4,500 lives. "But in return, Turkey must not allow the activities of groups opposed to our regime," Mr. Nouri said. "The Mujahadeen-e-Khalq is killing our officials and people. Regrettably, this group is active in Turkey and no one is doing anything about it."

Sweden to probe Hammarskjold report

STOCKHOLM (R) — Sweden said Saturday it was seeking more information on a report that the 1961 death of Swedish U.N. Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold in a plane crash in northern Rhodesia was not accidental. Foreign ministry spokesman Claes Jernaeus said retired diplomat Bengt Rosio would travel to Britain Monday. He will meet with one or both of the former U.N. officials who have made public new charges that Mr. Hammarskjold's plane was downed by mercenaries working for Belgium mining interests in the Congo (later Zaire). The trip, "is to find out what happened that day, not only because Dag Hammarskjold was Swedish, but because the (six) crew members of the plane were Swedish also," Mr. Jernaeus said.

Moroccan leftists to boycott polls

RABAT (R) — The avant-garde Democratic and Socialist Party (PADS) said on Saturday it would boycott the first elections in Morocco in eight years. The leftist party called on Moroccans to boycott the municipal and regional council elections on Oct. 16 "to express their indignation and their refusal of the democratic facade, cheating and falsification." The PADS is a radical offshoot of the Socialist Union of People's Forces (USFP), one of the leading opposition parties — is the first group to announce its position on the elections. Elections to renew the 306-seat chamber of representatives are expected to follow in November. The PADS said the results of referendum on a new constitution on Sept. 4 showed the authorities had "falsified the popular will in a trivial fashion, giving a humiliating and distorted image of the Moroccan people."

Rafsanjani returns to Tehran

NICOSIA (AP) — Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani returned to Tehran Saturday after a two-week trip to London, Pakistan and China. The official Islamic Republic News Agency said Mr. Rafsanjani noted that China had agreed to provide a nuclear reactor to Iran. The United States criticised the deal as "highly imprudent" because of fears Iran might develop nuclear weapons, but the news agency reported no comment on that criticism by Mr. Rafsanjani. Both Tehran and Beijing insist the nuclear cooperation is not aimed at producing weapons.

Djibouti says 39 rebels killed

DJIBOUTI (R) — Djibouti army commander Colonel Fati Hussen said Saturday 39 rebels had been killed and many wounded in renewed clashes in northern Djibouti. Three government soldiers were killed and six wounded in the fighting which began Thursday, he said. Col. Hussen said rebels of the Front for Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD) attacked government positions at Obock, a town on the northeastern coast of the tiny Red Sea state. He said the armed forces and para-military police were in control of the area and seized large quantities of equipment from the rebels. There was no immediate explanation for the fighting which follows a constitutional referendum designed to bring Djibouti into line with the tide of multi-party reform in Africa.

Algerian extremists vow more killings

ALGIERS (R) — Muslim fundamentalists said on Saturday they gunned down an Algerian communist and vowed that other "infidels" would also die. Abdul Rahman Belazhar, the first political activist killed amid months of attacks on security forces and government officials, was shot by gunmen waiting for him outside his home in Constantine Tuesday. Most of the attacks have been blamed on the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). The fundamentalists, speaking in the name of the FIS, said the man "had been found guilty of acting many times as an informer which had cost several FIS militants dearly."

Jordan hopes for Israeli seriousness in fresh talks

THE HEAD of the Jordanian team to peace talks with Israel has expressed hope that the Israeli side would be more forthcoming and serious when the negotiations resume in Washington Monday after a 10-day recess. Noting that the two sides were wide apart on defining a common agenda for the talks recessed on Sept. 4, Dr. Abdul Salam Majali also cautioned against expecting quick results in the peace process.

"The peace process is complicated," Dr. Majali was quoted as saying by the Jordan News Agency, Petra. "The (Arab-Israeli) conflict is decades old and cannot be resolved in a matter of days or weeks," he told Petra in Washington. Dr. Majali said the negotiations on the Jordanian-Israeli track were distinct from other tracks since the issues to be tackled were clear and dealt with many issues seriously and effectively with no ambiguity.

When the bilateral talks resumed on the sixth round on Aug. 24, "we did not feel any basic change in the Israeli position despite the change in the leadership in Israel" with the government of Labour leader Yitzhak Rabin assuming power only a few weeks earlier. There was indeed a shift in the Israeli stand in that the Jewish state has now acknowledged that it seeks a comprehensive solution to the Middle East problem, he said. "The Israelis have stopped

their attempts to reach unilateral deals with Arab states," he said, describing it as a positive step "but not enough."

The gap between the stands of both sides is still wide following several sessions of negotiations because of the many great expectations that were not met in negotiations," he said. However, "there is still a big chance that the Israeli side would return to the negotiating table with new directives and deal with the process more seriously."

Dr. Majali stressed that the issue of a common agenda for the Jordanian-Israeli track was not a procedural matter, but an issue of substance, adding that it was not strange for it to consume a longer time.

In this regard, he said, "we feel that some points were agreed upon, and some others are being studied... (and) we hope that we reach a unified agenda for both sides so that we could choose afterwards issues for the serious negotiations."

Dr. Majali said if the Israeli delegation returns without anything new on the issue of a common agenda, "then it would prove that they do not want peace."

He said the Bush administration was not prompted by any love for the Arabs or hatred for Israel or vice-versa to launch the peace process. "There is an obvious American interest in having peace in the (Middle East) re-

gion," he said. But if such peace is to last, he said, "it has to be just."

"Here I feel there is a gap between the U.S. and Israeli strategies through which we can gain our rights," he said.

In reply to a question on that progress achieved in various tracks in the peace process might vary, Dr. Majali said: "We used to tell our Arab brethren that progress in one track would vary from another because of the nature of the issues under discussion, and that is why progress in the Jordanian track or the Syrian track might be faster, and so on; things change in every round and we could not pay great attention to this."

He said that "what matters in this regard is not how fast progress is achieved, what is important is that the final solutions should be parallel in all tracks."

Dr. Majali referred to the Palestinian-Israeli track, saying that it witnesses continuous changes.

He said the Palestinians were discussing with their Israeli counterparts the transitional period and interim government arrangements based on the letters of invitation.

He said there are common issues concerning the Jordanian and Palestinian sides and that these issues would be discussed bilaterally without the presence

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Sharaa rejects as silly the idea of Israel 'leasing' part of Golan

CAIRO (Agencies) — Syria's foreign minister dismissed as "silly" the idea that Israel might lease back parts of the Golan Heights in return for recognising Syria's sovereignty.

"I don't think the Israeli side has prepared this silly offer," Farouk Al Sharaa said Saturday when he arrived in Cairo for meeting of Arab League foreign ministers.

Israel and Syria, breaking a diplomatic impasse in peace talks that had dragged on for months under former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, exchanged documents in Washington last week with rival proposals over the Golan and other issues.

Commentators have said Israel has suggested withdrawing from part of the strategic plateau it seized during the 1967 war and temporarily leasing other parts while recognising Syrian sovereignty.

Answering a question about "Palestinian fears" that a deal between Syria and Israel would

lead to a separate peace, Mr. Sharaa said Syria's position was an unchanged demand for full and unconditional Israeli withdrawal.

"There is no need for any Arab party to worry on this score as long as we are all committed to a complete solution," he said.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev said Friday a "unique chance" had emerged for peace in the Middle East, ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

Mr. Kozyrev was speaking after meeting Mr. Sharaa in Moscow ahead of next week's resumption of Middle East peace talks in Washington.

"As a result of compromise by all the parties... a unique chance has emerged to go further along the path of peace in the region, and this chance must not be wasted," Mr. Kozyrev told reporters.

Mr. Kozyrev said that he was keeping permanent contacts with acting U.S. Secretary of State

Lawrence Eagleburger.

"Russia, in line with the United States, is responsible to help the parties involved in bilateral negotiations achieve expected results," said Mr. Kozyrev, who has also held recent meetings in Moscow with Israeli and Palestinian delegations.

A senior Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official said Israel should set a date for withdrawal from the occupied territories, including Arab East Jerusalem, to show its goodwill at the peace talks.

Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, told reporters at Cairo airport late Friday that the new Israeli government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin should end all settlement activity in the occupied territories.

"Israel has to show goodwill inside the occupied territories so that the Palestinian people can exercise their national rights," he

(Continued on page 5)

New Bush plan clears way for Israel loan guarantees

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The Bush administration has revised an agreement to provide Israel with up to \$10 billion in loan guarantees to ensure there will be no cost to American taxpayers, according to a key member of Congress.

The change appears to clear the way for swift congressional action on the guarantees. An earlier plan had met objections from key members of Congress because the Israeli and U.S. governments would have shared the costs.

Representative David Obey and Senator Patrick Leahy, Democratic chairman respectively of the House and Senate subcommittees that deal with foreign aid, had insisted that Israel pick up all of the costs.

Mr. Obey said Friday he had told President George Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin he would oppose the guarantees unless it was assured that Israel pay the full costs. "The administration's revised agreement does exactly that," Mr. Obey said. A Senate aide confirmed Mr. Obey's reading of the plan.

Israel needs the guarantees to raise commercial loans to help it resettle an influx of immigrants, mostly from the former Soviet Union.

Under the earlier plan Israel's contribution to the costs of the guarantees would have been limited to 3.5 per cent of their face value. The costs, a kind of risk insurance, could be assessed by the White House budget office at seven or eight per cent.

The rest, about \$350 million would have been added to the U.S. budget, already in deep difficulties.

The guarantees are expected to be considered by Mr. Leahy's subcommittee next week. President Bush this week sought Jewish election support by reaffirming his commitment to Israel and apologising for criticism last year about Jewish lobbying for the guarantees in Congress.

Announcing to a Jewish audience that the guarantee package would be sent to Congress this week, Mr. Bush said, "don't let any member of Congress tell you we can't afford to do this. We can, and we must."

U.S.-Israel relations were strained last year when Mr. Bush linked the guarantees to a freeze on new Jewish settlements in the occupied territories and the deal was stalled.

Since then ties have improved with the election of a more flexible Israeli government.

In another development, Israeli officials said Israel opposes the U.S. plans to sell 72 American-built F-15 fighter jets to Saudi Arabia, but sees no place to fight the deal.

President Bush announced that he was approving the sale during a campaign stop at the McDonnell Douglas Corporation in St. Louis.

"Israel is against any supply of particularly advanced military equipment to a country that is in a state of war with Israel, and Saudi Arabia is still in a state of war with Israel," said Zalman Shoval, Israel's ambassador to Washington.

"But... Israel cannot determine for the United States its policies of supplying arms," Mr. Shoval added in an interview with

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Sharif Zeid returns, says King will be back soon

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and Royal Court Chief Khaled Al Karaki returned home Saturday after a private visit to Britain and reported that His Majesty King Hussein was in good health and expected to return home soon.

The King, who underwent a successful surgery to address a urinary tract complaint at an American hospital Aug. 21 and arrived in London early this month for recuperation, is recovering "very well... better than expected," Sharif Zeid told Jordan Television in a short statement upon arrival.

"I met him on Thursday (Sept. 10) and again I accompanied him to the Farnborough airshow on Friday," Sharif Zeid said. "He is in good health."

"I don't have an exact date," Sharif Zeid said in reply to a question when the King was expected to return home.

"But we will announce the date when we have it... it should be in a very short while."



Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker (second from left) and Royal Court Chief Khaled Al Karaki (third from left) are received upon their return home Saturday by Deputy Prime Minister Thoushan Al Hindawi (left) and Deputy Prime Minister Ali Subeimat (Petra photo)

U.S. assails Chinese nuclear sale to Iran

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — China's sale of a nuclear reactor to Iran will inevitably increase Iran's nuclear capability and was a "highly imprudent" move, the State Department says.

The department said Friday in a strong statement objecting to the sale that the facility could be used to develop nuclear weapons.

The agreement was announced Thursday during a visit to Beijing by Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani. U.S. officials said Iran also was expected to reach agreement on a nuclear power deal with Russia later this month.

Iran agreed to subject the Chinese reactor to international safeguards, but State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said the possibility to an Iranian attempt to build nuclear weapons could not be ruled out.

The deal with China "would inevitably result in an enhancement of Iran's nuclear infrastructure, which could be applied to activities of direct nuclear non-proliferation concern," Mr. Boucher said.

The Iranian regime's conduct in recent years raises serious questions about whether Iran can be trusted to live up to its commitments in the nuclear non-proliferation area," he said.

Mr. Boucher said the type of agreement reached with China "is highly imprudent and should be avoided." This was an apparent reference to U.S. allegations of Iranian support for international terrorism.

He said high Iranian officials have made statements in support of acquiring nuclear weapons. Mr. Rafsanjani said China had agreed to sell his country the makings of a 300-megawatt reactor for peaceful purposes.

On Thursday, Iran's largest anti-government opposition group, the Mujahadeen-e-Khalq, said Russia has agreed to sell Iran two 440-megawatt reactors and to provide some 170 technicians to install and operate them.

The State Department earlier criticised Iran for allegedly attempting to smuggle arms to its

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Iraqi official calls for freedom of press as a key priority

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — A brother of President Saddam Hussein said in a newspaper commentary Saturday that the government should introduce press freedom as a first step towards political reform.

Barzan Al Tikriti, a former intelligence chief and Iraq's envoy to the U.N. in Geneva, said the creation of a multi-party system in Iraq would be impossible without press freedom.

"We cannot establish democracy without granting the freedom of the press... otherwise we would be constructing a building without foundations," he added in the commentary published in the government newspaper Al Jumhuriyah.

The commentary, which he said represented a personal view, urged the government to end its monopoly on the press by allowing individuals and political groups to publish their own newspapers.

Freedom of the press will be achieved when the government relinquishes its control of the newspapers," Mr. Tikriti said.

Iraq has six newspapers. Al Jumhuriyah, the ruling Baath Party daily Al Thawra and the Defence Ministry newspaper Al Qadisiyah are all state owned. President Saddam's eldest son Uday owns the daily Babel, a sports daily, Al Baath Al Ridai, and two weeklies, Raffadin and Al Rasheed.

The government also has a weekly magazine — Alef Ba. "Press freedom materialises when it stays away from influence," Mr. Tikriti said.

"The government has no right to prevent a citizen from issuing a newspaper. Every citizen has the right to publish a newspaper," he added.

"Press freedom is a right of the people."

Mr. Tikriti's call was the third in less than a week for reform in Iraq.

On Monday, Uday called for democratic reforms to thwart what Iraq sees as western attempts to dismember the country.

Iraqi intellectuals made a passionate call in Al Jumhuriyah

for reconciliation between the government and its political opponents abroad.

President Saddam pledged in his first speech after the Gulf war in February 1991 to introduce a new constitution, multi-party activity and freedom of press. So far, none of these reforms has come into force.

Iraq asked the U.N. secretary general Saturday to intervene to ensure that the Gulf crisis sanctions committee treats it fairly.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Saeed Al Sahaf said in a letter to Dr. Boutros Ghali that the committee enforcing the U.N. trade blockade was preventing essential "civilian and humanitarian" materials reaching the Iraqi people.

He blamed this on interference from the main Western Gulf war allies: The United States, Britain and France.

"Essential civil and humanitarian commodities do not reach the Iraqi people due to the unfair and illogical attitudes often

(Continued on page 5)

Hrawi, Assad said to discuss Syrian pullout from Beirut

BEIRUT (Agencies) — President Elias Hrawi met in Syria Saturday with President Hafez Al Assad, and media reports said the talks dealt with a possible pull-back of Syrian troops from Lebanon's major cities.

Mr. Hrawi went straight into a closed-door conference with Mr. Assad upon his arrival by plane from Beirut in northern Syria's port city of Latakia, Mr. Assad's summer residence.

The presidential palace here declined to comment on topics of discussion. But Beirut's two leading dailies, the independent Al Nahar and the leftist Al Safir, have said the Syrian redeployment topped the agenda.

Syria maintains 40,000 troops in northern, eastern and central Lebanon under a 1976 Arab League mandate to smother the 1975-1990 Lebanese civil war.

That mandate was upheld by a peace accord also brokered by the Arab League in Saudi Arabia's summer resort town of Taif in 1989 to end the civil war.

The accord stipulated that Syrian troops should redeploy in East Lebanon's Bekaa Valley two years after political reforms redistributing power equally between Muslims and Christians were ratified.

Mr. Hrawi's talks with Assad follow elections that widened the rift between Muslims and Christians.

Diplomats said the two presidents also would discuss the formation of a new Lebanese government to replace that of Prime Minister Rashid Al Solh following the polls held over the past month which were boycotted by the majority of Christians.

Christian opposition groups

have called the election, the first in Lebanon in 20 years, a ploy by Syria to consolidate its strong grip over Lebanon.

Most of the victorious candidates were pro-Syrians. The rest were Muslim fundamentalists.

The diplomats said Mr. Hrawi and Mr. Assad would discuss ways of achieving a reconciliation among all Lebanese factions. But officials could not confirm if the two would discuss the withdrawal of the Syrian army from Beirut and the mountains to areas near the Syrian border.

Such a pullback would be in accordance with the Taif accord.

The Taif agreement said the Lebanese and Syrian governments should meet by September to plan the redeployment of the troops in Bekaa Valley.

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Rebel Afghan chief holds fire on Kabul airport

ISLAMABAD (R) — Afghanistan's dissident Hezb-e-Islami faction said Saturday it had taken control of all approach routes to Kabul but had agreed to peace mediators' requests not to resume attacks on the capital's airport.

"Kabul is completely surrounded from all sides," a Hezb official said in the Pakistani border town of Peshawar. But Defence Minister Ahmad Massoud left Kabul to visit northern Afghanistan, and was due back on Saturday or Sunday, raising questions about the effectiveness of the encirclement.

Peace brokers who negotiated a ceasefire that halted three weeks of fighting in Kabul last month persuaded Hezb leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar not to force closure of the airport.

"The threat... has been postponed at the request of the mediatory council," the Afghan News Agency said. The negotiators said that in

return they would try to convince the government to stop shelling Hezb positions elsewhere, the Hezb official in Peshawar said.

The fundamentalist Hezb, nominally a partner in the four-month-old Islamic government, had adopted a conciliatory approach because it did not want to be blamed as negotiators try to

silence the guns, the Hezb official said.

But he said fighting was still raging in the north between Hezb fighters and formerly communist militia now absorbed into the government army.

Mr. Hekmatyar maintains the government has failed to comply with last month's ceasefire by not ordering the militia, his bitter enemies, out of Kabul.

The militia's defection to the Mujahadeen helped topple the communist government, but Hekmatyar brands them traitors.

In Kabul, a Ministry of Defence spokesman said a drive to

rid the capital of unauthorised armed men was making progress. Blistering rocket exchanges and infantry offensives between Hezb and government forces devastated Kabul last month and, according to the International Committee of the Red Cross, killed up to 2,000 civilians and injured 9,000.

A buffer force of several thousand provincial fighters was in position around Kabul to separate the two sides, the ministry spokesman said.

A militia attack on Hezb bases in northern Baghlan province suffered heavy casualties, the Hezb-run Afghan News Agency said. Twenty were killed and 12 were taken prisoner, it said.

The Hezb official said the militia were fighting to reopen the northern highway from Kabul to the communists' stronghold in Mazar-e-Sharif.

While traffic apparently still runs to Kabul on highways from the north and east, Hezb fighters

man checkpoints. Last week they held up a U.N. food convoy.

Mr. Hekmatyar threatened Thursday to resume rocket and artillery fire on Kabul airport and nearby Bagram air base unless the bombing of his positions halted.

The Hezb has accused the militia of using MiG fighters and SU-22 bombers to bomb Shindand air base in western Afghanistan and positions in the north.

Kabul airport has reopened slowly to civilian flights since a devastating Hezb rocket bombardment forced its closure for most of last month and inflicted heavy damage.

A Pakistani plane carrying food, medicine and tents for hundreds left homeless by flash floods in northern Afghanistan touched down on Saturday. Earlier this week, an Iranian transport plane flew its first direct relief flight to Kabul since the fighting began.

U.S. again wants U.N. to seize Iraqi assets abroad

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The United States and its allies have revived a plan to seize Iraq's frozen assets overseas, including oil, and hope to convince Security Council members to adopt a resolution next month.

But diplomats said Friday the proposed draft, which is by no means certain of passage, would be drawn so narrowly that any prior national or commercial claims against Iraq's financial assets would be excluded from the seizure.

This would remove from consideration all Iraqi assets held in Britain and probably those in France and Japan as well.

However, it would permit Washington to seize most of the estimated \$1 billion of Iraqi money held in U.S. banks, where commercial debts do not come close to the total.

Iraq in March 1991 declared it had \$3.7 billion in deposits overseas.

When Washington earlier this year first proposed the idea, financial centres in Europe and elsewhere were agitated, believing that confidence in their banking system would be eroded if assets could be seized by a U.N. vote rather than through normal national procedures.

They also pointed out that Iraq had commercial debts in several countries, including weapons

purchases before the Gulf war, which needed to be adjudicated.

The proposed resolution would also cover Iraqi oil held abroad, most of which is being held in pipelines in Saudi Arabia and Turkey. But some experts questioned whether some of the oil, after being held for two years, would still be useable in its present form.

The purpose of the resolution is to raise money for U.N. inspectors scrapping Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and a compensation fund for war victims as called for by post-Gulf war ceasefire resolutions in April 1991.

More pressing is aid for dissident Kurds and Shiites as well as Iraqis elsewhere in the country who have been receiving relief supplies from U.N. aid agencies to offset the Security Council's economic embargo.

The proposals have been revived whenever it appears hopeless that Iraq will abide by Security Council resolutions compelling it to sell limited quantities of oil to pay for the U.N. costs and for humanitarian aid.

Baghdad, suffering from economic sanctions since it invaded Kuwait in August 1990, has refused to sell the oil, saying the conditions imposed by the big powers amounted to an unreasonable stranglehold over its economic life.

Iraq has also accused the United States of putting obstacles in the way of such oil sales because of its ties to oil producer Saudi Arabia.

Conditions for the oil sales include heavy U.N. monitoring of contracts and flows, U.N. supervision of all purchases of humanitarian supplies as well as their distribution. They also include a proviso that almost all oil be shipped through Turkey rather than Iraq's own port on the Gulf.

The distribution of humanitarian aid is particularly offensive to Iraq as relief workers are accompanied by U.N. guards. Iraq has refused to renew an agreement on the guards and aid workers, thereby bringing the relief programme to a near standstill.

In addition to assets in the United States, Iraq's March 1991 list of deposits overseas included \$537.7 million in Britain, \$492 million in Switzerland, \$359 million in Germany, \$214.7 million in Bahrain, \$144 million in Japan, \$160 million in Italy and \$77 million in France.

Smaller amounts of deposits were declared in Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Canada, Sweden, Finland, Yugoslavia, Cyprus, Turkey, Poland, Spain, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Kuwait, Tunisia, Morocco, Lebanon, Yemen and Greece.

Djerejian sees 'winds of change' in Middle East

WASHINGTON (USIA) — As the countries of the Middle East respond to the changes wrought by the end of the cold war, the United States will continue to pursue its fundamental goals of peace, security, stability and development in the region, a senior State Department official said Sunday.

Within that overall scheme, Washington's two key goals are to promote a "lasting and comprehensive peace" between Israel and its Arab neighbours, and to create "viable" security arrangements for U.S. friends and allies in the Arabian Peninsula, said Edward Djerejian, assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs.

Addressing the 20th anniversary convention of the National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA), Mr. Djerejian described the countries of the Middle East as being "buffeted by the same strong winds of change which have had such a dramatic impact on East/West relations." Those changes forced a general reevaluation of relationships within the region, and opened the door to the historic Middle East peace process now underway, he indicated.

The NAAA, one of the most prominent Arab-American political organisations, lists its main priorities as the strengthening of U.S.-Arab ties and the promotion of peace in the Middle East. Mr. Djerejian hailed the parties to the Middle East peace talks for having brought "serious, substantive" proposals to the negotiating table. He also praised the Israelis for halting work on many settlements in the occupied lands, ending various incentive programmes that lured new settlers to the occupied territories, cancelling expulsion orders for certain Palestinians and releasing hundreds of Palestinian prisoners.

"What this represents," he told the convention, "is a fundamental shift in Israeli national priorities, away from investment in the occupied territories and toward meeting pressing social, economic and human needs within Israel."

He acknowledged that these

and other steps "taken by the Israelis" are not enough, and added that all countries involved in the peace talks should do more "to keep the process moving." An end to the Arab boycott of Israel would be "an important step" not only for the peace process, but for the United States, as well, Mr. Djerejian said.

Asked to comment on President George Bush's "support in principle" of Israel's request for \$10,000 million in loan guarantees to help absorb new immigrants, Djerejian said that U.S. policy on that matter is driven by twin beliefs: that immigrant absorption is a legitimate humanitarian need, and that Jewish settlements in the occupied territories are an obstacle to peace. He made clear that any loan package approved by the administration would take both principles into account.

In response to a question dealing with the possibility of an independent Palestinian state, Mr. Djerejian pointed out that the peace process provides for a two-phased approach. The current phase deals only with transitional arrangements, and the second with "final status" negotiations.

"The future of the Palestinians is really at the bargaining table today, as we speak," he said. It is through the peace talks that the Palestinian people can improve their current situation and begin the process of self-government "without any prejudice to final status," he added.

Given the progress made thus far, Mr. Djerejian said it is "conceivable" that Palestinian officials will be "in a position to be governing themselves" by May of next year.

Commenting on security in the Gulf, Mr. Djerejian said that "the most immediate and serious threat to the region emanates from the leader Saddam Hussein, whose record of compliance with United Nations resolutions is 'completely unsatisfactory.'"

The recent U.N. declaration of a "no-fly" zone in southern Iraq was made in response to severe human rights violations against

Iraqi civilians in the area, and to an overall record of defiance and intransigence, he said. Mr. Djerejian stressed that the United States and its allies support maintenance of Iraq's territorial integrity, and pointed out that President Bush has repeatedly emphasised that "we seek Iraq's compliance, not its partition."

In other efforts to promote security in the Gulf, the United States has either concluded or renewed agreements with four of the states in the region "and (has) excellent working relationships with all of them," Mr. Djerejian said. He noted that bilateral arrangements are intended to complement security arrangements between the Gulf states themselves, and that the United States does not intend to station troops there.

Mr. Djerejian also discussed U.S. bilateral relations with various other countries in the region. Regarding Syria, Mr. Djerejian lauded the "broad-based dialogue" between the two countries, and credited those contacts with Syria's participation in the Gulf war coalition as well as in the peace process. Despite the many real differences that continue to exist between the two countries on issues such as human rights and terrorism, Mr. Djerejian said that Washington hopes to continue its dialogue with Damascus.

Turning to Lebanon, Mr. Djerejian described the United States as "clearly disappointed" with the recent elections in that country. The lack of proper preparation and the continued presence of Syrian troops led to low turnout, "widespread reports of irregularities," and results which "do not reflect the full spectrum of the Lebanese body politic," he said.

Discussing the possibility of normalised U.S. relations with Iran, Mr. Djerejian said that such a move would depend on Iran's renouncing its role as a sponsor of "terrorists," eliminating its human rights violations, and abandoning its "destabilising arms build-up," among other matters of concern to Washington.

U.N., Red Cross boost food shipments to Somalia

A Somali mother feeds her child at a 'Save the Children' feeding centre at Belet Huen, Somalia.

NAIROBI (Agencies) — Another 200,000 tonnes of food will be shipped to Somalia under a new plan announced on Saturday by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The two organisations, in a statement issued in Nairobi, said the shipments would be made over the next four months to help what they estimated were more than three million people in urgent need of food aid.

"To prevent further loss of life and run a more efficient relief organisation in Somalia, it is crucial that WFP and ICRC continue to enhance the cooperation and coordination of all food relief efforts into Somalia," a WFP spokesman said.

The two organisations have been cooperating in the Horn of Africa region for more than a year. The ICRC has delivered 93,500 tonnes of food aid since last January, and the WFP has sent 50,000 tonnes since May. "The new plan almost doubles the quantity to be shipped," the spokesman said.

Canada has begun relief flights and the United States is expanding its own operation in Somalia. Canada plans at first to make

two flights to Mogadishu for the Red Cross and possibly fly to the southern town of Bardera for the WFP, said Canadian air force spokesman John Jensen.

The United States, which is flying to Belet Huen, Wajir and Baidoa, planned to add flights to the town of Hoddur for the WFP, said U.S. air force spokesman Maryellen Jadic.

Belgium will send at least 500 para-commandos to protect famine relief in Somalia when the U.N. gets agreement from local warlords for further troop deployment, Belgium's Foreign Minister Willy Claes said Friday.

"It's a humanitarian operation," Mr. Claes told a news conference in Brussels after approving sending a battalion of paratroopers, supported by armoured vehicles and helicopters, to the famine-stricken country.

"Our paratroopers will be volunteers, aren't going there to interfere," Mr. Claes said. But he noted that "in the case of attack, they will have the right to defend themselves."

Mr. Claes said Belgium had received no word from U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali, who requested "the troops as Europe's contribution to a 3,500-

strong force, on when the Belgian soldiers were likely to be deployed.

The U.N. Security Council approved the force to stop armed looters stealing up to half of all food aid sent to Somalia.

Donors and aid agencies are shocked by wholesale looting of relief and having to pay gunmen to guard convoys because of the armed anarchy in the capital Mogadishu and elsewhere.

A 60-man advance guard from Pakistan's 500-strong contribution to the U.N. force is scheduled to reach Somalia next Tuesday.

Swiss and Italian authorities are meanwhile investigating where companies are involved in toxic waste dumping business in Somalia, an official said Friday.

The top United Nations environmental official, Mustafa Tolba, has claimed that Somalia's self-proclaimed health minister gave permission to Swiss and Italian companies to dump toxic waste in the starving country.

Hans-Peter Fahrni, spokesman of Switzerland's federal Environmental Protection Authority, said his office was "awaiting U.N. documents detailing the charges." Swiss criminal charges could then be filed, he said.

Salvage teams hope to haul silver fortune from deep sea

MUSCAT (AP) — Start with \$300 million in silver ingots and coins minted for an Arabian king. Put them on an American military ship with a mission so secret that the crew is not told about the stash in the cargo holds.

Add three German torpedoes plus water 2.5 kilometres deep. Toss in some sharks.

This isn't the plot for the next adventure of Indiana Jones but the basic ingredients of a real-life attempt to haul a sunken fortune out of a very deep sea.

Omani and French teams are expected to commence work in November on salvaging the treasure from the wreck of the John Barry, a U.S. military cargo ship that went down on Aug. 28, 1944.

A special strong room was built into the bottom of the ship's No. 2 hold ... to safeguard the precious cargo," said Jamal Abu Dawood, the owner of a Saudi diving company that has worked near the wreckage.

It lies 190 kilometres north of Yemen's Socotra Island and 200 kilometres off the Omani city of Salalah.

The John Barry was cut in half by the U-boat attack, but the cargo is believed to be intact.

The wreck is in a very good state of preservation, with ropes still hanging over the ship's

sides," said Mr. Abu Dawood. Raising it has become the obsession of Sheikh Ahmad Farid Al Aulani, chairman of the Desert Line Co. in the Omani capital Muscat and a direct descendant of the royal family that once ruled the Hadramaut region in Yemen.

His Ocean Group, a consortium of Omani businessmen, is believed to have spent \$7 million thus far to get the wreck surveyed and to plan the raising operation.

The John Barry Co., formed by a group of American businessmen, obtained the rights to cargo through the U.S. government's maritime administration in 1989. The U.S. government retained rights to the ship by never issuing a certificate of abandonment.

The John Barry Co. bought the rights for more than \$50,000 plus 10 per cent of the value of the salvaged cargo. That agreement remains in effect, although the Ocean Group bought out the John Barry Co. for an undisclosed sum.

The holds should contain 60 million troy ounces of silver, the equivalent of roughly one-third of the 200 million ounces of silver sold annually on the international bullion market.

The ship was named after the first U.S. naval officer to capture a British warship during the 1776 war of independence.

UNRWA appeals for funds

VIENNA (A.P.) — United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) has called on donor nations to grant it \$20 million in special funds to finance services it offers to Palestinian refugees in the Middle East.

In a meeting with United Nations in Vienna and UNRWA's Advisory Commission last week, UNRWA Commissioner-General Iltis Turkmen said the agency is still short of funds to carry out operations which could improve the quality of life for Palestinian refugees.

Mr. Turkmen said only \$6.7 million had been received in response to an appeal for \$25 million which he made in November last year and reiterated in April.

"Important activities are on hold until this funding can be assured," he said.

UNRWA still requires \$5 million for urgently needed school and health services and for environmental projects, Mr. Turkmen told the meeting.

MIDDLE EAST NEW IN BRIEF

Qadhafi upsets Tunisia with merger remarks

TUNIS (R) — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi has upset neighbouring Tunisia, until recently one of his few friends, by saying the country was doomed to unite with either Libya or the east or Algeria to the west. The Tunisian press has turned on Colonel Qadhafi, who was once immune from criticism in public, and President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali made a cryptic riposte in a speech Tuesday. Diplomatic sources said Ben Ali's displeasure at a junior Foreign Affairs minister, brought up Tunisia's displeasure at a meeting with Libyan ambassador Abdelati Al Obeidi Thursday. In several speeches over the past few weeks Col. Qadhafi has predicted that Tunisia would eventually be so short of water that it would have to merge with one of its two much larger neighbours. On Tuesday Mr. Ben Ali referred to "surprising remarks recently made about us by certain parties and their repeated statements insulting to Tunisia and Tunisians." The remarks were "completely without justification, unless it is part of a scheme to divert attention from the reality (of those who made them)," Mr. Ben Ali added. The ruling party newspaper Al Horriyah said Col. Qadhafi had led his country astray and into a dead end and was now trying to distract Libyans from their disastrous plight. Libya is seriously isolated, physically and politically, because it refuses to hand over two men suspected of blowing up an American airliner in 1988. A U.N. ban on flights to and from the country has been in force since April. Al Sharq, a newspaper close to the government, said: "Our hearts are with our brothers, the Libyan people. For their sake we hope that the evil predicament they are in will disappear with the disappearance of the cause."

Vote for those who pray, says Kuwait

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwaiti authorities have told voters to cast Oct. 5 general election ballots only for candidates who pray. The Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs said in a ruling published by newspapers over the weekend that voters were forbidden to plunk for candidates who did not pray or attend Friday prayers. It said a voter had to choose a candidate who would stand up for his rights and so a Muslim had to be careful to pick the best. The ministry reaffirmed that it was forbidden for voters to accept money, gifts or any other favour from candidates to vote for them. It also said voters should not choose candidates who "buy" or attempt to buy votes. Several candidates have complained publicly about so-called "vote-buying" — payment or influence-peddling to win votes. "Vote-buying" is illegal. A total of 303 candidates have registered to contest 50 seats in Kuwait's all-male national assembly elections.

5 killed, 5 wounded in Egypt land feud

ASSIUT, Egypt (R) — Five people were shot dead and five seriously wounded when an Egyptian family took revenge for the killing of two of its members 36 years ago, security sources said Saturday. Eight members of the Harasid family ambushed a tractor carrying 10 members of the Maazel family Friday and raked it with machinegun fire at a village in Assiut province, 325 kilometres south of Cairo. The attackers escaped. The Maazel were blamed for the death of two Harasids in a dispute over farmland in 1956.

OIC adopts new strategies

ISTANBUL (AP) — President Turgut Ozal said Friday that new strategies for economic cooperation among member states of an Islamic conference: here were adopted and steps were taken for their implementation. In his closing remarks, Mr. Ozal told delegates at the eighth meeting of the committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Islamic Conference (COMCEC), that the decision to have the private sector assume a greater role was a new strategy well received. He also pointed out the importance of the organisation "in exchanging opinions" in the economic field. Cooperation among member states, he said, "will enable the development of our countries by bringing together the manpower, technology and economic resources we each separately own." Tansu Ciller, Turkey's state minister for economy, said the organisation had decided to extend humanitarian aid to the peoples of Palestine, Lebanon, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Somalia and Afghanistan. Speaking after Mr. Ozal, Ms. Ciller said the new strategies included the recognition of a larger role to the private sector, securing structural changes in the economies of member states through liberalisation and helping them to become more active. She also said the decision was reached for cooperation under the COMCEC umbrella in the sectors of industry, agriculture, communication and energy. Speaking for the Asian group of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Pakistan's environment and town planning minister, Anwar Saifullah Khan, said Turkey had been helpful to Muslim countries through its assistance in their development in the economic, commercial and social sectors. He did not elaborate.

Don't badmouth mullahs, Ayatollah warns Iranians

NICOSIA (R) — Iranians risk losing the grace of God if they bad-mouth the Muslim clergy and blame them for their day-to-day problems, a senior Ayatollah said on Friday. "Some ordinary people say things about them (clergy) that God does not like," Ayatollah Abdolkarim Mousavi Ardebili, a former chief justice, told worshippers in Tehran. "Say someone goes to the bakery and is served a bit late, or goes to buy a chicken and is charged 500 rials too much. Now for him to come and say this regime is such-and-such and the mullahs are so-and-so — God will take back his blessings from man," he said in a Friday prayers sermon broadcast on Tehran Radio. His remarks referred to a point rarely acknowledged by Iranian leaders — that many Iranians regard the mullahs, who came to power in the Islamic revolution of 1979, as a self-serving group responsible for much of the country's current problems. Rejecting "slanders and calumnies" against mullahs, Ayatollah Ardebili said they had offered many "martyrs" for the revolution and clerics in theological schools led simple lives. "Granted that five or 10 among us may say, but to question the entire clergy or to make such uncalculated remarks is not to God's liking," he said.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:30 Michael Vaillant
17:55 Des Chiffres et des Lettres
18:15 La Chance Aux Chansons
19:00 News French
19:15 News Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Coach
21:10 Land of Birds
22:00 News in English
22:20 Midnight Caller

PRAYER TIMES

06:55 Fajr
07:13 (Sunrise) Duha
12:53 Asr
16:04 Maghrib
19:51 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifish Tel. 510740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

La Salle Church Tel. 61757

Terranova Church Tel. 623366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Assumption Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772561
Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811285
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 833824, 659802
Church of the Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be fair and winds will be northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Amman Min./Max. temp. 17 / 28
Aqaba 23 / 34
Dibers 16 / 32
Jordan Valley 22 / 35

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Joseph Imsh 770560
Dr. Saad Al 743000
Dr. Khalid Mar'ad 846070
Firas pharmacy 661912
Perdova pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 67025
Nabrook pharmacy 625672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisni pharmacy 637660

IRBID:
Dr. Ali Al Samman (-)
Al Shams pharmacy 278285
ZARQA:
Dr. Akram Al Haddad 985350
Khalid pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 02111, 637777
Fire Brigade 871228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 68021
Hotel Complaints 603800
Price Complaints 661776
Water and Sewerage
Complaints 87467
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information
(directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone
Repair 623101
Abdell Telephone Repairs 661101
Radio Jordan 774111
Jordan Television 773111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power
Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-33200

QUOTA ALIA INTL. AIRPORT 06-33200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 643632
Malhas, J. Amman 664164
Palestine, Shamsi 664171/4
Shamsi Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Mawardi Hospital 667227/71
Al-Ahli, Abdell 664164/6
Halla, Al-Mawardi 775110/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775112/6
Army, Marha 891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital 602249/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 07/983323
Zarqa National Hospital 07/903560
Ibn Sina Hospital 07/986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital 07/989590
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital 02/225555
Greek Catholic Hospital 02/227275
Ibn Al Nafies Hospital 02/247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital 03/314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. 06/332005, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

18:00 Dubai (RJ)
18:00 Jeddah (RJ)
18:10 Larnaca (RJ)
18:15 Aqaba (RJ)
18:30 Damascus (RJ)
18:35 Madrid, Malte (RJ)
18:50 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
17:40 Madrid (RJ)
17:45 Cairo (RJ)
18:30 New York, Amsterdam (P)
18:30 Brussels, Paris (P)
18:35 London (RJ)
19:25 Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
19:30 Vienna (RJ)
21:30 Rome (P)
21:30 Frankfurt, Geneva (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

07:30 Beirut (ME)
12:30 Moscow, Bahrain (GF)
14:40 Moscow (SU)
16:30 Larnaca (CY)
18:30 Cairo (MS)
20:30 Beirut (ME)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

03:00 Beirut (ME)
10:00 Beirut, Rome (AZ)
13:40 Doha, Bahrain (GF)
17:45 Moscow (SU)
21:35 Larnaca (CY)
21:35 Cairo (MS)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

05:00 Madrid (RJ)
05:30 Brussels (RJ)
06:00 Madrid (RJ)
06:30 Damascus (RJ)
07:20 Aqaba (RJ)
07:30 Frankfurt (RJ)
08:00 Aqaba, Rome (RJ)
08:00 New Delhi (RJ)
11:50 Tunis, Comblane (RJ)
12:00 Rome (RJ)
12:00 Vienna (RJ)
12:15 Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
12:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
13:10 Moscow (SU)
13:45 New York, Amsterdam (P)
21:00 Riyadh (RJ)
21:30 Jeddah (RJ)
22:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:30 New Delhi (RJ)
23:15 Bangkok (RJ)
23:15 Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
23:45 Athens (RJ)

MARKET PRICES

Upward price in Jds per kg.

Apples (red) 300 / 450
Bananas 450 / 400
Bananas (Mekammar) 450 / 400
Bananas 400 / 330
Cabbage 120 / 80
Carrot 450 / 350
Cauliflower 150 / 100
Cucumbers (large) 100 / 80
Cucumbers (small) 300 / 250
Eggplant 90 / 70
Garlic 600 / 500
Lemon 180 / 160
Marrow (large) 180 / 160
Marrow (small) 360 / 300
Onion (dry) 170 / 120
Pepper (hot) 150 / 100
Pepper (sweet) 300 / 250
Potato 100 / 80
Fig 400 / 300
Grape 280 / 220
Black Grapes 300 / 250
Green Grapes 280 / 220

Government plans 'comprehensive assessment' of Royal Jordanian

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government has ordered a "comprehensive evaluation" of the national carrier, Royal Jordanian (RJ), as the first step towards exercising its options towards privatising the airline, informed officials said Saturday.

A government-appointed committee has already received several offers from international consulting and financing agencies to conduct the evaluation process, which will not be limited to the assets and liabilities of the airline but will include its overall structure, traffic rights, market value and goodwill, the officials said.

The committee, chaired by the minister of transport and including the chief executive officer of the airline, is studying the offers and will soon award the contract, according to the officials.

"It is the first concrete step in the process of privatising the airline," said one of the officials. "It is difficult to define a timeframe for further steps since a lot depends on the outcome of the evaluation," he said.

According to the official and other sources, the move towards an overall assessment of the airline's status was prompted by a report submitted by auditors Arthur Anderson, an

international firm which has been studying the affairs of the carrier. The auditors have already completed two phases of their scrutiny of RJ.

In two reports they submitted to the government, the auditors presented their preliminary findings as well as possible options to streamline the finances of the airline, whose total foreign and local debts are believed to be around JD270 million, according to the source. The third and final report of the auditors will include definite recommendations, the source added.

"The current examination of the airline is mostly an auditing process and scrutiny," said the source. "But an overall evaluation — as ordered now — should go beyond counting dollars and cents and include an assessment of the airline not only as the national carrier but also as an international institution built over the years with dedicated efforts by its employees," the source added.

"This is the only way to come up with an accurate picture of the airline and help the process of restructuring it," added the source. "Anything short of that, like looking at it as a means to contribute to addressing shortcomings in other spheres of the national economy, is not the right approach and will only complicate things."

"The reality has to be accepted," said the source. "The airline has huge debts accumulated over the years. A mechanism has to be found to address the debts, to ensure that the situation

does not recur, and to put the airline back on the track. The approach has to be comprehensive," the source said.

Over 60 per cent of RJ's debts are owed to banks and other commercial institutions abroad and payable in dollars. Local creditors include the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company, the Social Security Corporation and the Housing Bank.

According to the sources, the auditors have suggested that the JD22 million capital of the airline is too small when compared with its operations and that it be raised to make the company compatible.

The most likely option the government would exercise in the privatisation process is to convert the now wholly-state-owned carrier to a public shareholding company, with the government and its various agencies continuing to own the equity during an interim period after which it would be completely privatised, with or without government owning and shares.

"Some of the local creditors — which are government-controlled anyway — will be given stakes in the new entity as settlement of their dues," said one official.

The heavy burden of the debts is seen by economic experts as the biggest problem facing the airline. Most agree that the carrier is making net operational profits but the cost of servicing the debts not only wipes out the profits but also pushes it deeper into the red.

The airline's troubles are mostly attributed to what experts describe as an over-ambitious expansion programme pursued during the oil boom years in terms of operations, facilities and fleet strength.

In defence, RJ officials argue that such descriptions can be given to the airline only when seen in the context of a national carrier flying to limited destinations in the region. They point out that RJ had crossed the threshold of being a limited regional airline as far back as the early 80s and was competing with international giants such as United, Pan-American and European carriers on long-distance flights such as New York to Singapore and Chicago to Bangkok.

In addition, they say, RJ's training centres, aircraft maintenance workshops, simulators and other facilities make the airline stand out among national carriers in the region.

"A price had to be paid for bringing out the airline into the international and regional scene, and part of the debt that it has incurred was this price," said one RJ official.

The airline, which now has one of the biggest networks among regional airlines, flies to most Arab capitals, including the Arab Maghreb, most of Europe, New York and Montreal in North America, and India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia in the Far East.

In 1989, the airline suspended its flights to Chicago and Los Angeles among other cost-cutting measures, which, according to RJ sources, produced a turnaround in the operational costs and helped it manage through one of its most critical periods in its history.

The airline does not "own" any of the planes that it is operating now but has leased them for 12 years at the end of which the aircraft become RJ property.

GUVS to launch fund-raising campaign

AMMAN (J.T.) — Up to 10,600 students from government schools, community colleges and universities will march in various parts of Jordan in the first week of October to collect donations for Al Amal Cancer Centre, being set up at the Jordan University Hospital.

The announcement was made by the executive president of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) Abdullah Al Khatib, who is also chairman of the National Committee entrusted with carrying out the project.

Dr. Khatib said the intensive door-to-door campaign will take place between Oct. 2 and 7 in all towns of Jordan to collect contributions for what he called a "vital project."

Final arrangements have been made for the campaign and most of the students who will take part in the campaign will come from Ministry of Education schools, said Dr. Khatib in a statement Saturday.

Dr. Khatib said that there will be a sponsored march to start at the Sports City in Amman also in the course of raising funds for the JD 14 million centre, which will be treating needy cancer patients free of charge.

He said radio and television will air programmes during the campaign encouraging the public to support the project.

Last month, Dr. Khatib issued an appeal to the public to offer donations, saying that the centre's building is now ready but huge funds are needed to equip it.

He said that the centre takes priority on the list of GUVS various programmes in view of the growing number of cancer patients in Jordan.

The national committee warned last month that the number of cancer cases in the Kingdom was increasing each year. The number of new cancer cases registered in 1991 was 1214, and should the trend continue, there will be an increase of up to 70 cancer cases in Jordan for every 100,000 inhabitants annually.

The centre will include an outpatient clinic for radiation treatment, an operation room, an X-ray room for breast examination, an ultra sound examination room, and offices for specialists.

Meeting discusses means of upgrading postal services in Arab World

AMMAN (Petra) — Delegates from 10 Arab countries gathered in Amman Saturday for a two-week seminar on planning in postal services, organised by the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in cooperation with the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications.

Participants are expected to discuss problems facing postal services in the Arab states, means for promoting and modernising these services, postal management and postal planning systems.

Addressing the opening session, Minister of Post and Telecommunications Jamal Sarairoh said "Jordan considers itself part of a United Arab postal bloc seeking to enhance and expand the postal network and services on a continuous basis."

He said Jordan is also giving due attention to the quality of



Jamal Sarairoh

postal services and has embarked on "new comprehensive plan for modernisation, taking into consideration the needs of the local and Arab markets."

Mr. Sarairoh said Jordanian postal authorities are expanding traditional services they offer to the extent that Jordan is now linked to almost all nations which

adopt the UPU, approved postal system.

"Jordan attaches great importance to decisions taken by the Arab ministers of telecommunications in matters related to strengthening postal services among Arab countries and inter-Arab agreements," said Mr. Sarairoh, thanking the UPU for its support to help the Arab countries upgrade their postal services.

Mr. Omar Amer Mitwally, UPU representative at the meeting, read out an address by the UPU director general in which he referred to the main aims of the organisation as adopted at the 1989 Washington meeting.

He said these objectives define measures to be taken by UPU member nations to improve postal services, particularly in developing nations.

Saudis keep ban on vegetables

AMMAN (R) — Saudi Arabia's three-week-old ban on Jordanian produce has dumped around 500 tonnes of vegetables meant for sale to the Gulf on local markets each day, diplomats and officials said Saturday.

Saudi Arabia claims the vegetables are contaminated by pesticides and dirty water. Amman denies the charges, which, according to the Saudis, are based on laboratory tests.

"For the time being, nothing has changed (on the imports)," a Saudi embassy source told Reuters. He added that contacts between the two countries were under way to settle the dispute.

Saudi Arabia, which until the Gulf crisis imported around 60 per cent of Jordan's annual agricultural exports of some 500,000 tonnes, told Jordan it would only resume imports if Amman guaranteed that the produce was

not contaminated by sewage water and pesticides.

A Jordanian official said the government had sent to Riyadh its own tests, showing random samples were free of contaminants.

Jordan was awaiting a Saudi response, said Salem Al Lawzi, head of the Agricultural Marketing Organisation.

Officials say about 500 tonnes a day of tomatoes, cucumbers, eggplants and other vegetables, which would have been exported to Saudi Arabia, were being sold in local markets, depressing prices. The wholesale price of a kilo of cucumbers fell to 250 fils on Saturday from 310 fils three weeks ago.

Saudi and Jordanian officials discount political motivations behind the ban since the two countries recently began to improve relations after they deteriorated during the Gulf crisis.

MECC organises symposium

AMMAN (J.T.) — A symposium aimed at defining educational, social and health requirements for rehabilitating children who suffered from armed conflicts in the region will open in Amman Tuesday.

The meeting, held under the title "Children of War: Where To...?" hopes to spread awareness among non-governmental organisations in the region about the

impact of the Middle East wars on children. It will also discuss means of improving the quality of life for children of the region and call on world governments to implement the U.N.-sponsored Rights of the Child Convention.

The meeting, which is organised by the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), will be held under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor.

Bulgaria to raise imports of Jordanian phosphate

AMMAN (J.T.) — Bulgaria has agreed to raise from 60,000 to 150,000 tonnes the amount of phosphates it imports from the Kingdom annually, in a bid to help adjust the balance of trade between the two countries, which is in favour of Bulgaria.

The announcement was made by Minister of Supply Mohammad Saqqaf upon return to Amman from a three-day visit to Sofia in which he held trade talks with Bulgarian officials.

Mr. Saqqaf said Jordan was seeking to buy its meat from countries that import Jordanian phosphate, fertilisers and potash, saying that the Kingdom does not accept a situation whereby the trade balance between Sofia and Amman remains in favour of Bulgaria.

Mr. Saqqaf said he demanded that Bulgaria export high quality to Jordan, especially during the holy month of Ramadan, and adhere to the internationally recognised specifications.

During the visit, Mr. Saqqaf, who was accompanied by a four-member delegation, held talks with the country's ministers of industry, trade and agriculture to discuss bilateral trade.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

Exhibitions

- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Iraqi artists Ghassan Gha'eb and Walid Rashid at Baladna Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "A Dialogue in Expression" — works on paper by Naz Ikramallah, Nabila Hifni and Dodi Tabaa at the National Gallery, Jabel Lwethdeh Park.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "Exploring Science" at Al Hussein Vocational School in Karak.
- ★ Exhibition entitled "The Horizon" by Artist Qasem Al Samir and Najah Al Rabi' at the Housing Bank Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition by Iraqi artist Ali Al Mimar at Alla Art Gallery.

Symposiums

- ★ Symposium entitled "Population Explosion in Jordan" at the Royal Cultural Centre — 4:30 p.m.

Delegations leave for U.S. to attend talks on water

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordanian and Palestinian delegations to the meeting of the working group on water within the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process left Amman for Washington Saturday.

The meeting, which opens in the American capital Tuesday, is expected to lay down the foundation for a solution to the water problems in the region after achieving a just and durable peace based on international legitimacy and the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions.

The Washington meeting will be a follow-up to an inconclusive

meeting held in Vienna last May during which Israel rejected Arab demands.

The Arab parties will submit a detailed report about the surface and underground water resources that have been exploited by Israel during the occupation period which started in 1967 and the negative results of such practices.

The Arab parties will demand that Israel pay compensation for exploiting Arab water before agreeing with the Jewish state on new arrangements for the distribution of water resources that would end Israel's current domination on these resources.

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Jordan hopes for seriousness

(Continued from page 1)

of the Israeli side. "At the same time the three sides — the Jordanian, Palestinian and Israeli — should be present together when certain issues are discussed, but we have not reached that point yet," he said.

Member of the Jordanian delegation Jawad Al Anani noted that the negotiations would tackle such thorny issues as the status of the occupied territories, the withdrawal of Israeli forces, water resources, refugees, and others.

Dr. Anani, also quoted by Petra, was against having a time table for the negotiations since many people were linking any development in the peace process with other issues that might have very little influence in the negotiating process.

"Some people link the peace process to the U.S. presidential elections and believe that something should take place before these elections which will be held in November this year so that President Bush would have a better chance to win," he noted.

"I believe that this might be related, but in fact this will have a great impact on the concerned parties, and the cost might be very high on them," he told Petra.

"We should avoid having a set timetable for the process... how can we speed up dealing with historical and basic rights so as to meet a certain political indicator."

He said the Arab parties should not exaggerate expectations when the Israeli teams return to Washington, especially that the change in the Israeli position is not substantial, although they have more acceptance of the concept of Security Council Resolution 242, which forms the basis and the reference

for the peace process "previously they had their own interpretation of the resolutions and now they accept to have it in the process," he said.

Dr. Anani pointed out that there were other issues over which the Israelis did not show any flexibility, namely Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab lands in accordance with Resolution 242. "They do not accept the term 'all' because they say the resolution does not include it and they maintain that their approval of withdrawal means determining the outcome of negotiations beforehand," he said.

He added, "this time they say that negotiations might lead to withdrawal but they refuse to commit themselves to it before hand."

He said the Israeli side does not show flexibility regarding other issues such as the use of arms of mass destruction.

He stressed that Jordan insists on the basic points such as the need for Israel to withdraw from the occupied Jordanian lands, the recognition of the rights of refugees, and the need for Israel to accept it is an occupying power and in this regard Jordan cannot offer any compromise.

Dr. Anani said that Jordan affirms the possibility of reaching a sort of "an agreement on peace because pacts man a lot in international law and the Israelis insist on a pact for psychological factors."

He said Jordan will not sign an agreement unless Israel withdraws from Jordanian and Palestinian territories. But he stressed that Jordan was negotiating only Israel's withdrawal from occupied Jordanian territories and supports the Palestinian side in its negotiations.

Iraqi official urges press freedom

(Continued from page 1)

forced... by the U.S., Britain and France," Mr. Sahaf said.

"The continuation of the committee's activities in this manner will harm the credibility of the international organization," he said in a letter published by the Iraqi News Agency (INA).

Mr. Sahaf listed electric fans, metal bars for building hospital beds and children's bicycles as some of the banned items.

He urged the U.N. chief to stop what he termed "the committee's ridiculous practices which contradict all human norms and considerations."

Iraq will begin destroying thousands of tonnes of toxic material drained from its vast arsenal of chemical munitions later this month, a U.N. chemical weapons expert said Saturday.

Briton Roo Manley, who inspected plants built for the task at Iraq's main Munitions facility, told reporters in Baghdad he had asked Iraqi experts to modify the equipment before they begin bulk disposal of nerve agent and mustard gas.

But he said he would recommend that the U.N. special commission charged with scrapping Iraq's weapons give Baghdad the go-ahead to begin the destruction process, expected to take between six months and one year.

A chemical hydrolysis plant the size of a three-storey house will be ready to begin neutralising nerve agents in a couple of weeks while a more complex five-metre-long furnace will begin incinerating mustard gas in about two

months, he said.

'Kawait, Sandis gave arms'

Kuwait and Saudi Arabia shipped American missiles and bombs to Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war without U.S. approval, the Los Angeles Times reported Saturday.

Kuwait supplied Iraq with an undisclosed number of Tow anti-tank missiles and the Saudis sent Baghdad as many as 1,500 bombs, the newspaper reported, citing a classified report prepared by congressional investigators.

The paper quoted a General Accounting Office (GAO) report as saying other American weapons may have been transferred to Baghdad during the Iran-Iraq war but that a GAO investigation was blocked by the U.S. administration's refusal to press for information from its allies in the Gulf.

The report suggests Saudi authorities may have misled U.S. officials about the number of bombs it transferred to Iraq. It questions the accuracy of the Reagan administration's required notification to Congress about the transfer.

The report says investigators found no evidence that U.S. officials authorised the transfer, according to the paper.

The newspaper said the State Department protested at the Kuwait shipment but the Reagan administration made no effort to recover either the advanced anti-tank missiles or the bombs provided by the Saudis.

Sharaa rejects idea of 'leasing'

(Continued from page 1)

said. "A date has to be set for an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian lands including Jerusalem... discussion of this issue cannot be deferred to a later stage," he added.

Mr. Kaddoumi, in Cairo also for the Arab League ministerial meeting, said Mr. Rabin's government was using a new language but had to match words with deeds.

"The language used by the new Israeli government has been flexible so far but we still have to feel this flexibility in reality," he said.

"A practical end to settlement and a date for the withdrawal from the territories would distinguish it from the old government (of rightwing Likud Party leader Yitzhak Shamir)," Mr. Kaddoumi added.

Mr. Rabin said Thursday that Israel would withdraw from at least part of the Golan Heights in exchange for full peace with Damascus.

PLO Executive Committee member Yasser Abed Rabho told Reuters in Tunis Friday Palestinian peace negotiators would seek a similar Israeli pledge on the occupied territories.

Israel has invited two top Egyptian officials for discussions on ways to advance Middle East

peace efforts, a senior Israeli official said Saturday.

Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin told reporters after an hour of talks with Foreign Minister Amr Musa that he hoped Mr. Musa and President Hosni Mubarak's top political adviser Osama Al Baz would visit Israel soon.

"We invited both of them and I really hope that they will come very soon to Israel. It is very important because Egypt is the only Arab state with which Israel has peace," said Mr. Beilin, who walked the one-kilometre distance from his hotel to the Egyptian Foreign Ministry because of the Jewish Sabbath.

Mr. Mubarak accepted an invitation to go to Israel when Mr. Rabin visited Cairo in July. "Our relationship should be a kind of a cornerstone for the development of this process between Israel and the whole Arab countries," said Mr. Beilin.

Before arriving in Cairo he said he hoped for a more prominent Egyptian role in multilateral Middle East peace talks.

Mr. Beilin added his talks with Mr. Musa on Saturday and Dr. Baz on Friday focused on the multilateral talks, due to resume next month. He said there were differences between Egypt and Israel but hoped they could be ironed out.

U.S. assails Chinese nuclear sale

(Continued from page 1)

Muslim allies in Bosnia in violation of the U.N. economic embargo. Iran denied the allegation.

Meanwhile, Gulf Arab states and their western allies are working on strategies to deal with Iran's possible acquisition of former Soviet submarines, a senior British naval officer said Saturday.

"Until now we've focused on Iran's surface forces. But Iran intends to purchase submarines for her own navy," said Captain Tony Hogg, commander of British naval forces in the Gulf.

A senior Russian official confirmed in June widespread reports that Iran had bought three submarines from the former Soviet Union. The successor states in the Commonwealth of Independent States had yet to honour the contract, he added.

U.S. newspaper reports said the three submarines were K-class 70 metre diesel patrol which carry 45 crew and 18 torpedoes each.

Capt. Hogg told a press conference on board the British frigate Chatham in Dubai's Rashid port that naval commanders from the Gulf states and the Western allies considered the submarine threat

from Iran at a meeting 10 days ago.

"The meeting looked at how they could be deployed, should they be bought," he said. The shallow waters of the Gulf were "an appalling place for both submarines and anti-submarine operations," he added.

Tensions have increased between Iran and its Gulf Arab neighbors since its virtual annexation in April of the small island of Abu Musa, half-way across the Gulf and close to the deepest shipping channel in the Gulf. Waters around Abu Musa go even deeper, reaching more than 60 metres — not far from the Gulf's entrance in the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran's action increased speculation that it might want to build a base on Abu Musa that could be used by its submarines it acquires.

Capt. Hogg said the Sept. 2 meeting on the frigate was attended by naval representatives of the United States, Britain, France and Australia and "the majority of Gulf states." He would not name them.

He said the Abu Musa dispute was raised at the meeting but the United Arab Emirates, which shares control of Abu Musa with Iran, had not sought help.

Plan clears way for loan guarantees

(Continued from page 1)

Israel Television.

Mr. Bush has promised the deal would not put Israeli military superiority at a risk. White House Chief of Staff James Baker telephoned Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin Thursday to inform him of Mr. Bush's decision, said Oded Ben Ami, Mr. Rabin's spokesman on defence issues.

"Right now it is just verbal opposition," Mr. Ben Ami explained, refusing to elaborate if Israel would be seeking "compensation."

Nevertheless, Mr. Shoval and Israel's military attaché in Washington Gloria Rom have been invited to meet Defence Secretary Richard Cheney over the sale, Israel Television reported.

The Saudis want to buy 72 planes in a \$6 billion deal with terms still being negotiated. Building them would preserve 7,000 defence jobs, according to McDonnell Corp. where the jobs are.

The White House said the sale would "directly provide over 40,000 aerospace jobs" and have an economic impact on workers in 45 U.S. states.

Mr. Bush said he had considered the stability of the Middle

East, the need to maintain Israel's military edge, the Arab-Israeli peace talks and the defence needs of Saudi Arabia and its relationship with the United States.

"I have worked on this issue personally, touching every base, and I am now satisfied that we have adequately addressed each of these concerns and that we can, and indeed must for our own interest, go forward with this sale," he said.

The U.S. plans would threaten Israeli Deputy Defence Minister Motta Gur said the U.S. plans would threaten Israel's security.

"Israel has every reason to oppose the sale of the planes to Saudi Arabia... this is an issue that truly affects the security of the state of Israel," Mr. Gur told army radio.

"Whoever looks at the common border between Israel and Jordan and Saudi Arabia cannot be indifferent to (the presence of) additional F-15s in Saudi Arabia," he said.

Mr. Gur suggested Israel would expect U.S. measures to bolster the Jewish state's security. "We must... strengthen, along with the Americans, our national security in such a way that this type of sale won't harm us," he said.

Hrawi, Assad

(Continued from page 1)

Officials said Mr. Hrawi and Mr. Assad consult on the Arab-Israeli peace talks due to resume in Washington on Monday.

Mr. Hrawi, a Maronite elected president Nov. 24, 1989 with a mandate to oversee the Taif accord, signed the reforms into law on Sept. 22, 1990 and the Lebanese parliament ratified them two days later.

Right-wingers of one million-strong Maronite sect, the largest among the Christian community, were outraged by the insistence of Mr. Hrawi's Syrian-backed administration to conduct the elections before the Syrian redeployment.

In addition to boycotting the polls, two key Maronite cabinet members, Foreign Minister Faris Bweiz and Telecommunications Minister George Saadeh, resigned their posts.

That tipped the sectarian balance in the half-Christian, half-Muslim cabinet.

Several Muslim leaders called after the elections for reconciliation with the Christians to set the stage for forming a new balanced cabinet. Mr. Assad has been urged to oversee the reconciliation.

The European Community Friday said the Lebanese election had produced a parliament which did not fully reflect the will of the people.

In a glum assessment of voting, the 12 EC states said in a statement that the democratic process had been impeded by alleged irregularities and interference.

The statement said member states "regret that the low turnout, alleged irregularities and interference and denial of access to voting booths in the south has impeded the democratic process and produced a parliament which does not fully reflect the political will of the Lebanese people."

"They reaffirm their support for the Taif accord as the best basis for achieving Lebanese independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, free of all foreign troops," the statement said.

Giant-killer question dogs Bush, Clinton

by Jim Wolf
Reuters

WASHINGTON — What did he know and when did he know it?

Washington's old giant-killer question — first asked about Richard Nixon during the 1973 Senate Watergate hearings — is back and haunting the election campaigns of President George Bush, on Iran-Contra issues, and Bill Clinton, on his draft record.

For Mr. Bush, the issue is fresh evidence challenging his account of his role, as vice president, in the Iran-Contra affair. The Reagan administration's most damaging scandal.

Questions about Mr. Bush's involvement have been revived by a document containing then-Secretary of State George Shultz's notes of a 1987 telephone conversation with then-Secretary of Defence Casper Weinberger.

According to the notes, Mr. Weinberger expressed indignation that Mr. Bush had played down his knowledge of the arms-for-hostage deal in a 1987 Washington Post interview.

In that interview and subsequent comments, Mr. Bush said he never weighed in against the Iran arms sales policy because he was unaware of Mr. Shultz's and Mr. Weinberger's objections.

"We were not in the loop," he said at the time.

Now, five years later, Mr. Bush is being asked to square that account with the Shultz memo quoting Mr. Weinberger's angry and incredulous reaction.

The memo, dictated to an aide the day after the interview, said Mr. Weinberger had called to complain about Mr. Bush's disclaimer, and said it was "terrible. He was on the other side. It's on the record. Why did he say that?"

The memo was introduced in

an obstruction-of-justice case being brought against Mr. Weinberger, the highest-ranking Reagan administration official indicted in the Iran-Contra affair.

"What gives this episode its relevance is Mr. Bush's efforts to make 'trust' a theme of his reelection campaign," Washington Post columnist David Broder wrote recently.

Beyond the question of whether Mr. Bush withheld information or shaded the truth as to his knowledge of Iran-Contra, the Clinton campaign has seized on it to fend off constant hammering over Mr. Clinton's draft status during the Vietnam war.

Opening the final leg of the run for the November 3 election, Mr. Clinton challenged reporters on Monday to probe the "veracity" of Mr. Bush's stated lack of knowledge of the arms-for-hostage deal.

At a campaign stop in Independence, Missouri, the front-running challenger said Mr. Bush's action may have demonstrated "support for illegal conduct."

Mr. Clinton added that any inconsistencies in Mr. Bush's comments should be treated far more seriously than reports about his draft history.

Mr. Clinton was responding to a question about why he had blamed reporters, in an interview with NBC News on Sunday night, for the latest hitch in his year-long struggle to explain how he stayed out of uniform during the Vietnam War.

This latest flap, based on a Los Angeles Times report, forced Mr. Clinton to issue a statement late last week that he had known since last spring that an uncle had tried to shield him from the war by getting him a spot in the naval reserve.

After the Los Angeles Times report, Mr. Clinton first said he knew nothing of his uncle's actions, then acknowledged that someone had informed him of it last March.

The political difficulty is that answers that appear hedged lead to media scrutiny that distracts from other messages a candidate is trying to convey.

Although Mr. Clinton is likely to play up Iran-Contra to impugn Mr. Bush's credibility, the six-year-old scandal is so complicated and resonates with so few voters that its impact may be limited.

Thus, Mr. Clinton may be in greater peril from these "character" issues right now, some analysts said.

Since Mr. Bush is a well-known quantity to most Americans, "revelations about Iran-Contra are less likely to overturn the public's view of him, whatever it may be, negative or positive," said Ellen Hume, a media analyst at Harvard's Shorenstein Barone Centre on the Press and Politics.

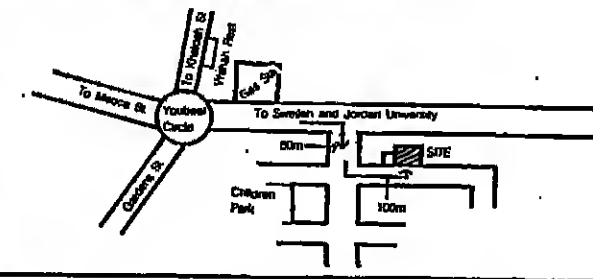
Mr. Clinton, on the other hand, is relatively little known. "Therefore revelations or doubts are much more likely to stick," she added.

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German Athletics Federation bans Krabbe

ment on Friday's decision from IAAF headquarters in London. The federation's general secretary, Istvan Gyulai, was on his way to athletics meeting in Seoul.

The DLV said it followed the IAAF and the International Olympic Committee that clenbuterol was an anabolic drug.

But Woessner, the athletes' lawyer, may appeal against the ruling to the DLV's legal committee, saying clenbuterol is not performance-enhancing.



A black and white photograph showing a close-up of a person's arm and shoulder. They are wearing a dark-colored sweatshirt with the word "NIKE" printed in white capital letters on the sleeve. The background is dark and out of focus.



Katrin Krabbe

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THE BETTER HALF 6

By Harris

Opening lead: Queen of ♠

The saw "When in doubt, draw trumps" is among the older, and more cherished, of bridge maxims, but not the wisest. We think the opposite is true. Don't draw more trumps than necessary.

North-South bid patiently and well to reach an excellent small slam in hearts. In declarer, bid was artificial, and forcing. North's first

rewarded when East, who could not ruff profitably, discarded a spade, allowing declarer to win. A spade to the ace was the entry for another diamond lead, and was as well. If East had discarded a heart, North's trumping declarer's losing diamond, so East discarded a club. Declarer won and ruffed a diamond on the board. Whether or not East overruled, one trump trick was all the defender could do.

مكة من اجل

U.S. business confidence in economy withering

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Business confidence fell sharply in summer after rising through the first half of the year, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has said, as fears mounted that a recovery was withering rapidly.

The chamber's latest business confidence index, measuring the attitudes of 5,515 businessmen and women, shows they turned markedly more pessimistic by last month after six months of buoyant hope.

The index — a bimonthly average of three subindexes measur-

ing the economic outlook, business sales and hiring prospects six months ahead — fell to 58 in August from 64.2 in June, when it was last compiled.

"You can almost see people's confidence withering," the business group's chief economist, Lawrence Hunter, said in an interview. It was the first time since December that the index had fallen.

Consumers also are losing confidence about job prospects, a fact that worries President George Bush. Just eight weeks from the Nov. 3 presidential vote,

surveys show the trembling recovery has become voters' No. 1 concern.

"I have been concerned about the confidence factor," Mr. Bush told the convention of B'nai B'rith, the Jewish fraternal organization. "You have so much gloom and doom about the economy that people are scared."

Mr. Hunter said the chamber's survey is "a main street index" that measures the attitudes of entrepreneurs like those who run small retail businesses, machine shops and restaurants and are close to their customers.

Nearly three-quarters of those surveyed have fewer than 25 employees.

"The fact that these people see a decline in August when momentum in a recovery should

European currencies end tumultuous week clinging to ERM grid

LONDON (R) — European Community (EC) currencies ended a tumultuous week Friday still clinging to their existing levels in the bloc's exchange rate grid, after feverish realignment speculation failed to dislodge them.

But, with just over a week to go until France's Sept. 20 referendum on the Maastricht treaty on European union, the semi-fixed exchange rate mechanism (ERM) remained fragile.

Several EC central banks piled into the open market Friday to support the lira — seen as the leading candidate for any devaluation.

But, despite the hundreds of millions of dollars spent by the Italian, German and Belgian central banks on foreign currency intervention, the Italian currency remained slumped just above its ERM floor of 765.40 to the mark.

The pound sterling fared better, trading around 2,790 marks, just above its ERM floor of 2,780 marks after British Prime Minister John Major put his own credibility on the line by pledging again not to take "the soft option" of devaluation.

Currency analysts doubted however that the lira and the pound would survive a French "no" vote. Some questioned whether the lira would survive even until Sept. 20.

"The government is desperately trying to get through to Sept. 20 without any (currency) realignment, but it is going to need more than good intentions," said Mario Noera, chief economist at Milan merchant bank Euro-mobiliare.

Ironically, the dollar, usually a victim of the marks strength, benefited Friday from the turmoil in Europe, ending sharply higher at 1,443 marks after 1,407.8 on Thursday as central banks sold the German currency to prop up the lira.

Worries rejected the accord in a referendum in June — have driven investors into the mark, traditionally seen as a safe haven in times of uncertainty.

A French "no" vote would kill the EC's existing plans for economic and monetary union and wreck havoc in financial markets.

The strength of the mark, worries about Maastricht and record high German interest rates have put a severe strain on European attempts to align their currencies in order to improve trading conditions.

Earlier Friday, Tokyo's 225-share Nikkei average closed 800.78 points lower at 18,107.69 on futures-linked selling.

In New York, the Dow Jones industrial average was up just 0.82 points at 3,305.98 in early trading there.

Gold closed in London at \$340.45 an ounce, down from \$342.25 on Thursday.

In oil, the international benchmark Brent Blend was down one cent at \$20.37 a barrel for October delivery on London's International Petroleum Exchange.

OECD says reforming states to get more aid

PARIS (AP) — The bulk of aid to poor countries in the next decade will go to those trying to reform, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) says in a new report.

Both government and private donors will become more discriminating in their foreign aid, the Paris-based OECD said in its annual survey on debt and financing for poor countries.

"To a much greater than in the last decade, resource flows are likely to go to those countries making progress on the economic and political fronts," the report said.

The OECD groups the world's largest 24 industrialised democracies. It provides economic statistics and analysis to member states.

The report said that with development funds becoming ever tighter in wealthy countries, aid recipients will be scrutinized closely to see if they merit donations or refinancing.

The OECD survey said total net resource flows from its members to developing countries totalled \$137.5 billion last year. The figure is almost the same as in 1990, but represents a three per cent decline after adjustment for inflation and exchange rate fluctuations.

World trade growth slows

WASHINGTON (AP) — World trade, in both value and volume, grew slower last year, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The value of trade in U.S. dollars rose about four per cent in 1991, compared with 14.5 per cent in 1990 and 8.2 per cent in 1989, the IMF said in its annual Direction of Trade Statistics yearbook.

In volume, trade growth slowed down for the third straight year to three per cent, which was the slowest pace since 1983, the report said.

Exports from industrial countries rose by 2.1 per cent and imports by 0.9 per cent in U.S. dollars, compared with 15 per cent growth for both exports and imports in 1990, it said.

The report said the overall trade balance of the developing countries moved into a deficit for the first time since 1986, with imports exceeding exports by \$30 billion. Exports for the countries rose by 8.1 per cent while imports increased 14.1 per cent, it said.

Among the worst reported performances was in the states that make up the former Soviet Union, where exports declined by 7.2 per cent and imports by 16.7 per cent.

The IMF reported \$2.5 trillion in exports from industrial countries and \$956.9 billion from developing countries, with imports of \$2.6 trillion by the First World and \$986.5 billion by the Third World.

'Alternative' economists blast Bundesbank policy

BONN (R) — Left-wing economists fiercely attacked the Bundesbank Friday, saying the German central bank's high interest rates were having catastrophic effects and accusing it of exceeding its authority.

"The Bundesbank's high interest rate policy is damaging to every respect," the working group for alternative economic policy, which has close links with trade unions, said in a report on financial and monetary policy.

"This sharply restrictive line is having catastrophic consequences in east and west Germany, in the European Community and other countries and is falsely justified in theory," it pointed out.

The report accused the Bundesbank of exceeding its authority and said it should be made more accountable to parliament.

"Through its dictates on interest rate policy, the Bundesbank has misused its autonomy status in the difficult phase of economic unification and challenges in the world economy," it said.

Bundesbank policy was directly obstructing the government's efforts to stimulate investment in former communist East Germany by making it harder for companies to borrow money, it said.

Professor Rudolf Hickel, an economist from Bremen University and one of the authors of the report, said the Bundesbank's attempt to curb money supply growth through high interest rates was having the opposite effect.

High interest rates attracted funds from long-term investment into short-term deposits, thereby boosting M3, a broad measure of money supply which the Bundesbank closely monitors.

Taking German electronics group Siemens as an example, Dr. Hickel said:

"If Siemens invests relatively short-term because of attractive interest rates, no one can seriously claim that Siemens is building up an inflationary potential. It is following a certain investment strategy."

The independent Bundesbank has come under strong criticism in Germany and abroad since it raised the discount rate in mid-July to a record 8.75 per cent from eight per cent, even though German economic growth was slowing.

The Bundesbank insisted the increase was necessary to slow down rapid growth in lending, which was boosting money supply and could lead to a pick-up in inflation.

Dr. Hickel called on the bank to cut the discount rate to six per cent and the more important Lombard rate for emergency lending in the banking system to eight per cent, their levels in autumn 1990 before five successive increases took them to their current highs. This would stimulate economic growth and create jobs.

Challenging the Bundesbank's argument that rising bank lending could be inflationary, the economists said east Germans needed to borrow to pay for the reconstruction of their battered economy and west German companies had to borrow more because their economy was slowing.

Credit-financed investment would eventually stimulate growth, they said.

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CAR FOR SALE

Model 1985, colour red, duty paid, full options, sunroof, automatic gear, air-conditioned, electric tinted windows, velvet seats, power steering, electric antenna, radio and recorder.

Price after inspection.

Please call tel. 697979, Mr. Samer.

FOR RENT

Super deluxe floor at Sweifiah. Consists of 3 bedrooms, with inset cupboards, laundry room, maid room with bathroom, living room, salon, dining room, one glassed-in veranda and another spacious veranda. Area 324 square metres.

Call tel.: 610362

Financial Markets

in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close 10/9/1992	New York Close 9/11/1992
Sterling Pound	1.9580	1.9210
Deutsche Mark	1.4258	1.4308
Swiss Franc	1.2665	1.2905
French Franc	4.8585	4.9235
Japanese Yen	125.65	124.30
European Currency Unit	1.4227	1.3985

USD Per SYG
European Opening 9:00 a.m. GMT

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.06	3.06	3.12	3.31
Sterling Pound	10.18	10.37	10.62	10.62
Deutsche Mark	9.62	9.62	9.56	9.43
Swiss Franc	7.66	7.66	7.66	7.56
French Franc	10.18	10.27	10.30	10.27
Japanese Yen	4.31	3.93	3.68	3.65
European Currency Unit	11.62	11.56	11.38	11.15

Practical Metals

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	341.10	6.50	Silver	3.71	.080

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Date: 12.9.1992

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6710	0.6730
Sterling Pound	1.2678	1.2942
Deutsche Mark	0.6621	0.6644
Swiss Franc	0.5197	0.5223
French Franc	0.1361	0.1368
Japanese Yen	0.5393	0.5420
Dutch Guilder	0.4103	0.4124
Swedish Krona	0.1265	0.1271
Italian Lira	0.0604	0.0607
Belgian Franc	0.02242	0.02253

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7510	1.7700
Lebanese Lira	0.02485	0.02685
Saudi Riyal	0.1755	0.1784
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2300	2.3100
Qatari Riyal	0.1818	0.1840
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2100
Omani Riyal	1.7110	1.7250
UAE Dirham	0.1818	0.1840
Greek Drachma	0.3815	0.3915
Cypriot Pound	1.9950	1.6150

CAP Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	1.9.1992 Close	8.9.1992 Close
All-Share	141.75	145.62
Banking Sector	104.84	106.73
Insurance Sector	147.58	150.74
Industry Sector	191.81	198.47
Services Sector	191.81	198.42

December 31, 1990 = 100

Cinema Tel: 677420

CONCORD

Michael Keaton & Michael Pfeiffer in

BAT MAN RETURNS

Show: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema Tel: 634144

PHILADELPHIA

Al Pacino in

THE GODFATHER III

Show: 12:30, 3:15, 6:15, 9

Special shows for children on Thursdays and Fridays at 11:00 a.m.

PROBLEM CHILD

Tel: 675571

Nabil Al Mashini Theatre

at 6:00 p.m. daily

Shahrazad and Sinbad play

A quiet comedy for all members of the family (adults and kids). Prior reservation is needed.

The next show is:

(Tas' Waqaymeh)

Tel: 625155

AHLAN THEATRE

Nabil and Hisham

(former Rainbow cinema)

"Ahlan New World Order"

Show starts at 9 p.m.

Cinema Tel: 634144

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FURNISHED FLATS FOR RENT

Consisting of one and two bedrooms located in Shmeisani near the former Yugoslav Embassy.

Call tel.: 616658

FURNISHED OFFICE FOR SALE

Separated flat, 4 rooms, carpets, curtains, office, separate entrance and parking.

Best location in Amman — 3rd Circle.

Please call 689354

CAR FOR SALE

MERCEDES 280SEL

Model 1985, colour red, duty paid, full options, sunroof, automatic gear, air-conditioned, electric tinted windows, velvet seats, power steering, electric antenna, radio and recorder.

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FOR RENT

Furnished or Unfurnished

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Call tel.: 610362

JORDAN TIMES TEL: 667171

FOR RENT

MODERN FURNISHED FLATS

One bedroom, living-dining room, kitchen and bathroom. C.H. and telephones.

Location: Jabal Amman between 3rd & 4th Circles.

Tel: 667882 - 642351

FURNISHED FLAT FOR RENT

Consists of 3 bedrooms, salon, dining room, two bathrooms, kitchen, independent central heating, solar heater with telephone. Furniture in excellent condition.

Location: Sweifiah near the Olympia Hotel.

Call tel.: 814286/814287

FOR RENT

FURNISHED APARTMENT

Ground floor apartment with large garden in Jabal Amman 3rd/4th Circles. Located within a well-kept pleasant building in a quiet neighbourhood.

One bedroom, sitting and dining room, fully-equipped kitchen, 1½ bathrooms, own central heating, colour T.V. and telephone. Sun-lounge that can be used as extra bedroom.

Call 622359/625053 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

We will not fire first, says Bosnian Serb leader

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnia's Serbs have placed all their heavy weapons around four cities under U.N. supervision and will not fire them unless they come under heavy fire, Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic said Saturday.

"Even if we are provoked we will not fire back," Mr. Karadzic told Reuters by telephone from Pale, his headquarters outside Sarajevo. "If it is just a few shells we shall not respond — only if we come under heavy attack from the Muslims."

Mr. Karadzic was speaking moments after a noon deadline for the weapons to be put under United Nations observation around Sarajevo, Bihac, Jajce and Gorazde.

"We have been ready since the day before yesterday to accept U.N. supervision," he added, insisting that if any heavy shelling broke out now it would be started by his Muslim and Croat foes.

Sarajevo enjoyed its quietest night for months on the eve of the deadline, although earlier Friday city centre buildings including the Bristol Hotel were set on fire by shells.

There were no reports of shelling in the Bosnian capital Saturday, but Radio Sarajevo said a heavy artillery attack had been launched on Bihac and its surroundings only hours before the deadline.

The radio quoted its correspondent in the western Bosnian towns as saying: "Powerful explosions of mortar, howitzer and tank shells can be heard from all sides." There was no independent confirmation of the report.

But only minutes later the first cracks appeared in the weapons monitoring agreement.

Mr. Karadzic said he hoped the monitoring of the heavy weapons would lead to a permanent ceasefire in Sarajevo and elsewhere.

"We are willing to stop the fighting now and stay where we are and wait for a political solution, which should be reached very soon in Geneva," he said.

He confirmed that he would himself lead the Bosnian Serb delegation to the Geneva peace talks due to start next Friday.

"I will stay there as long as it takes — as long as I am not wasting my time," he said.

The current fighting erupted when Bosnia's Muslims and Croats voted for an independent state against the wishes of the Serb minority, who have used their far greater firepower to take control of some two-thirds of the republic.

But Mr. Karadzic insisted that the five month ordeal of Sarajevo was not a siege, but a defence of the 60-70,000 Serbs in the capital.

"We are letting humanitarian convoys into the city but the Serbs there are not getting any aid," he said. "They are hostages — we demand that the Muslim side let them go."

In Belgrade, U.N. envoy Cyrus Vance, who met Mr. Karadzic and Bosnian government leaders

Ejup Ganic, a Muslim member of the Bosnian presidency, told Reuters in the centre of Sarajevo: "We were shelled all day from Karadzic's side."

"Ask UNPROFOR (the United Nations Protection Force) how many (Serb) positions they are monitoring ... and they are welcome to monitor our weapons."

Despite his words, only sniper and light arms fire was heard in the city centre and Mr. Ganic did not specify where the shelling had taken place.

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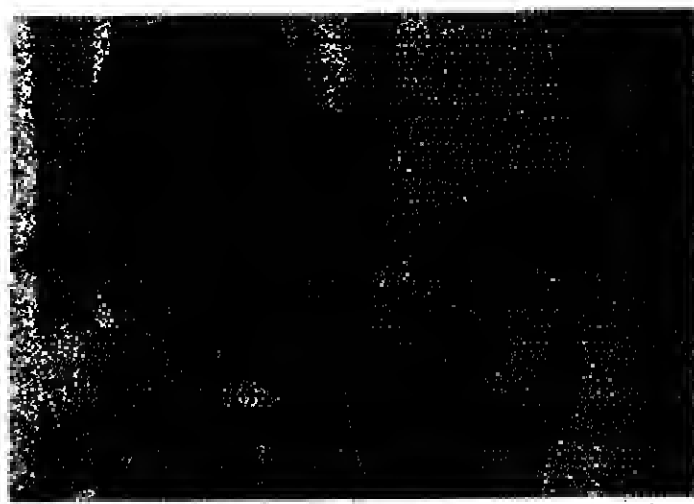
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In Belgrade, U.N. envoy Cyrus Vance, who met Mr. Karadzic and Bosnian government leaders



A Serbian fighter takes aim in Sarajevo as fighting eases in Bosnia.

Thursday along with European Community mediator Lord Owen, unexpectedly prolonged his visit.

Lord Owen flew home to Britain earlier Saturday but Mr. Vance had more talks with Yugoslav Prime Minister Milan Panic. He also discussed the heavy weapons monitoring with Yugoslav chief of staff Zivota Panic and UNPROFOR Commander General Satish Nambiar, along with UNPROFOR head of civil affairs Cedric Thornberry.

Sources close to the meeting said they also discussed aspects of an agreement signed Friday by Prime Minister Panic committing Yugoslavia to take "all practical steps" to end the siege of Sarajevo.

Yugoslavia, now consisting only of Serbia and Montenegro, officially has no part in the Bosnian conflict, but still exercises strong influence over the Bosnian Serbs.

The joint communique, which also pledged steps to end "ethnic cleansing" of Muslim and Croat civilians from Serb-majority

areas, was not signed by Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic.

Mr. Milosevic, a hardline nationalist, is a rallying figure for many of the Serb irregulars fighting in Sarajevo and he and Panic are in increasingly open conflict.

Mr. Panic's Foreign Minister Vladislav Jovanovic resigned Thursday, bitterly denouncing his policies, and was promptly reappointed as Serbian foreign minister by Milosevic.

Mr. Panic and Yugoslav President Dobrica Cosic also agreed to reopen the main motorway linking the Croatian capital Zagreb and Belgrade, closed since Croatia's secession a year ago.

They undertook to permit the stationing of independent observers at military airfields and border crossings between Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro.

The communique said agreement in principle had been reached to demilitarise the Prevlaka peninsula, Croatia's southernmost tip on the Adriatic, now occupied by Yugoslav Federal Forces.

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Yeltsin reverses threat to oust opponents

MOSCOW (AP) — Boris Yeltsin has reversed threats to try and oust hardline opponents from the Russian Supreme Soviet and recent polls indicate the Russian president's popularity is slipping.

Mr. Yeltsin's Friday statement came amid claims of victory by Russian nationalists who said they had forced the president two days ago to postpone a long-awaited trip to Japan.

They had threatened to seek Mr. Yeltsin's impeachment if he surrendered any of the disputed Kuril Islands to Japan in exchange for badly needed economic aid.

"The story of the visit to Japan and South Korea that failed to take place testifies to Mr. Yeltsin's shaky position and to a weakening of the democratic will in the Russian leadership," Izvestia said in a commentary Friday.

"The supporters of a moderate course to international affairs have suffered a serious defeat," it said.

Mr. Yeltsin's government has slowed the pace of its painful economic reforms in recent months, loosening up some of the tight fiscal policies imposed at the beginning of the year.

Recent polls have shown Mr. Yeltsin's popularity falling. The percentage of people who trust Mr. Yeltsin's economic policies fell to 33 per cent in August, from a January high of 58 per cent, the daily Izvestia newspaper reported Tuesday. The poll did not give a margin of error.

Sergei Skvortsov, a leader of the All-Russian Committee for the Defence of the Kuril Islands, called the postponement of the Japan visit "the first real victory for the patriotic forces — Communists and non-Communist patriots."

He added: "It is perfectly clear that the existing regime is unable to change its anti-people policy and should be liquidated."

The president's unexpected support for lawmakers came less than two weeks before the Supreme Soviet legislature is to convene.

Mr. Yeltsin's statement Friday was a clear departure from previous threats to call a national referendum or new elections to remove the former Communists who dominate the legislature and the larger Congress of People's Deputies.

It indicated that Mr. Yeltsin now thinks he might lose such a battle.

"Now, when the most difficult state of reforms is over, it is important to end all talk about the uselessness of deputies' work," Mr. Yeltsin said during a visit to the Volga River city of Cheboksary, 650 kilometres east of Moscow. The speech was carried live on Russian Radio and later broadcast on Russian Television.

He said that there was no evidence to support any suggestion that the aircraft was fired upon or exploded in flight.

But the two former officials said two mercenaries have admitted in taped interviews that they shot at the plane from two intercept aircraft to divert it and prevent the meeting.

"They were acting under orders from the mining Cabal conference here, with me as its chairman," Mr. Watanabe said in an interview with Kyodo News Service published overnight.

"Given the present situation, we may have to reconsider," the foreign minister added.

Mr. Watanabe was quoted as saying he would make a final decision on his return from next week's U.N. General Assembly meeting in New York, where he was expected to meet Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev.

He rejected remarks by Mr. Yeltsin earlier in the day in the

S. African judge takes over massacre inquiry

CAPE TOWN (R) — A judge appointed by President F.W. de Klerk to probe South African township violence said Saturday he had taken over the inquiry into a massacre by troops in the nominally independent Ciskei homeland.

Judge Richard Goldstone, respected by all sides for the impartiality of his enquiries so far, said in a statement his commission, which includes judges and legal academics, had taken over from Ciskei's own Justice Department.

He said he would report to President F.W. de Klerk by the end of the month Monday's gunning down by Ciskei soldiers of at least 28 people in a crowd of 60,000 marching on the homeland capital of Bisho. Nearly 200 people were wounded.

He said also that he had appointed 26 lawyers, policemen and soldiers to five special investigation teams that would report directly to him on violence in four key areas.

Police Saturday reported 18 people, including a family of six at Empangeni in Natal province and four policemen, killed in township violence Friday.

The independent South African Institute of Race Relations said Friday 1,800 people had died in township violence this year and 13,600 people had been killed in

clashes since 1984.

In King Williamstown, adjacent to the Ciskei capital of Bisho, police released 154 people detained Friday in connection with arms found at an African National Congress (ANC) Youth League office.

Police said two men were held and would face charges of illegal possession of arms apparently stolen from the homes of Ciskei soldiers after Monday's massacre.

South Africa usually argues that it cannot dictate to or dismiss military ruler Oupa Gqozo because Ciskei, a small southeast tribal territory, is an independent country.

But in an apparent concession to international pressure following Monday's shooting, Mr. de Klerk instructed Judge Goldstone to report on the incident.

"The state president has further requested the commission urgently to make recommendations on steps which should be taken to prevent a repetition of such events," Judge Goldstone said.

He said he had agreed with Ciskei's chief judge to take over the enquiry from Gen. Gqozo's administration.

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Hammarhjold death was no accident — former aides

LONDON (R) — The plane crash that killed U.N. Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold in northern Rhodesia in 1961 was not accidental but caused by mercenaries working for Belgian mining interests in the Congo, former U.N. officials say.

The former officials, in a letter published in Britain's Guardian newspaper Friday, say they decided to speak out after the downing of an Italian plane on a U.N. relief mission to Sarajevo on Sept. 3.

"Now the Italian crew on a mercy mission to Bosnia have been shot down we feel it is time that we should say that we are convinced that ... Hammarskjold was killed in the same way," George Ivan Smith and Conon O'Brien wrote.

The two men were U.N. representatives in Katanga, a province of the newly independent Congo (later Zaïre), at the time of the U.N. Secretary-General's death.

Mr. Hammarskjold was killed on Sept. 17, 1961, when his plane crashed on its way from the Congolese capital, Leopoldville (now Kinshasa) to the northern Rhodesian town of Ndola to persuade the president of Katanga to end his bid to secede.

The official version of the crash was that there was no evidence to support any suggestion that the aircraft was fired upon or exploded in flight.

But the two former officials said two mercenaries have admitted in taped interviews that they shot at the plane from two intercept aircraft to divert it and prevent the meeting.

"They were acting under orders from the mining Cabal conference here, with me as its chairman," Mr. Watanabe said in an interview with Kyodo News Service published overnight.

"Given the present situation, we may have to reconsider," the foreign minister added.

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COLUMN

Japanese kids get first taste of five-day week

TOKYO (R) — Japanese children are treated this week to their first five-day school week, but many may soon be wishing for a return to the good old six days of classes. The Education Ministry is making the second Saturday of each month a rest day for the country's 18 million children. The move coincides with a nationwide cry for shorter working hours, reflecting criticism abroad of Japanese "workaholicism."

"The key point in five-day weeks is to realise the importance of extra-curricular activities for education," a spokeswoman for Japan's National Congress of Parents and Teachers Associations said. But in the worst and most likely case, instead of extracurricular activities or just plain old play time, the children will be sent to Juku (cram schools), where conditions and teaching methods are much more spartan than in public schools. According to news reports, more than half Japan's school-age children go to cram schools in the evenings and during holidays to get the jump on fellow students in securing places in good schools and universities.

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Ramos seeks peace with Muslim rebels

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (R) — President Fidel Ramos appealed Saturday for peace in the southern Philippines, where Communist rebels and Muslim secessionists have been fighting government troops for two decades.

"I reiterate my appeal to you to support me with everything that you have so we can make the peace process succeed," he said in a speech at a university.

"I am confident it will succeed."

Gen. Ramos later urged Muslim leader Nur Misuari, chairman of the separatist Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), to consider the government's peace offer.

"Nur Misuari is missing a good opportunity. This is the best offer we can make ... I hope he takes advantage of it because he might be isolated," he said at a news conference.

Mr. Misuari lives in Saudi Arabia but his spokesman earlier rejected a government amnesty plan.

Gen. Ramos, who has offered an amnesty to all rebel groups, pushed his peace initiative during a visit to Zamboanga City in Mindanao. The southern island was the scene of a Muslim secessionist war in the early 1970s which killed more than 50,000 people.

"The uprising tapered off in the late 1970s after the government signed an agreement with the MNLF granting autonomy to 13 provinces in Mindanao.

Sporadic small-scale clashes have continued in the area despite a ceasefire agreed in 1986.

Gen. Ramos called for unity and cooperation to prevent a similar war from erupting again. But on Thursday a MNLF spokesman rejected the amnesty offer.

"It is a shame to accept amnesty. God will not forgive him who surrenders to his enemy," said Zain Jali. "The motive is for the MNLF to surrender. They cannot fool us."

Communist leaders last month also rejected the offer but later agreed to hold talks with the government to find a solution to the 23-year-old Marxist insurgency.

The government has also asked rebel soldiers behind six coup attempts during the previous administration to accept the amnesty proposal.

Gen. Ramos, who visited government projects in Zamboanga, also released 240 million pesos (\$9.6 million) for development projects in the region and announced plans to turn Zamboanga into a free port.

Georgian soldier killed, but truce mainly holds

MOSCOW (R) — A Georgian soldier was killed Saturday